

CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY (DILLING). Edited by S. Alstead and J. G. Macarthur. Twenty-first Edition. (Pp. xii+741, 35s.). London: Baillière, Tindall & Cassell, 1965.

For this new edition of Dilling's Clinical Pharmacology extensive revision has been undertaken by the staff of the Department of Materia Medica and Therapeutics of Glasgow University, based in the Stobhill and the Western District Hospitals.

For medical students it is good that so many of the modern textbooks of pharmacology are written by authors familiar not only with pharmacology but also with the use of drugs in current therapy. This is the case with this excellent book. Few books for this price give so much information. There is an interesting section on chemical nomenclature, sensible advice about prescribing and a useful section on immunising agents.

Many students will find this book too detailed; and for its size I would like to have seen included less didactic statement and more critical discussion of modern controversies. It should surely devote more space to the discipline of the controlled therapeutic trial. There is a limited bibliography of useful reference books and textbooks, but I would like to see references to contemporary papers at the end of each chapter. The modern student needs to be persuaded to read journals; it is a necessary discipline if he is to remain an educated doctor throughout his life and in no subject is this more obvious than in modern therapeutics.

O.L.W.

PSYCHIATRIC NURSING. By David Maddison, Patricia Day and Bruce Leabeater. Second Edition. (Pp. vi+511, 40s.). Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1965.

This second edition of a readable text-book for nurses deserves the popularity its first edition achieved. The section dealing with anti-depressant drugs has been revised, but the authors have continued to place more emphasis on trade names for drugs in most instances than on their approved names.

Nurses will continue to find in this book a valuable guide to psychiatric nursing.

J.G.G.

PHYSIOLOGY OF MAN. By L. L. Langley and E. Cheraskin. Third Edition. (Pp. 657 and xii; Illustrated, 68s.). New York and London: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1965.

AMERICAN medical students often gain a greater knowledge and understanding of physiology in two terms of study than their British equivalents gain in five. There are many reasons for this. One is that most American medical students come to physiology with a superb working knowledge and understanding of the alphabet of medicine; physics, chemistry, mathematics and biology. They rapidly and easily assimilate the concepts of physiology and can discuss them with incredible dexterity. The lack of feeling for the basic sciences in most British medical students is perhaps the greatest weakness in British medicine. It is a weakness which most teachers in British medical schools reinforce continually by their own limitations in the basic sciences.

It would have seemed appropriate, therefore, that the text-book of physiology for people who are ignorant in physics, chemistry and biology should be written in Britain. I regret to say that even here we have been beaten. Langley & Cheraskin in their book "Physiology of Man" have written an excellent account of physiology for those who want to learn rather than understand the subject. It makes practically no assumptions of background knowledge in the reader. It is superficial and provides nothing for the enquiring mind. Nevertheless it is a nicely produced book and is enjoyable to read. It could well be useful as an introductory text for British medical students or as a text for science students taking physiology as a subsidiary subject. But its superficiality is enough to damn it as main text for medical students. It would only compound the intellectual disability which is regrettably fostered by much of the teaching in the British medical schools and stems from an early revolt against the basic sciences.

I.C.R.